

# WINTER NEWSLETTER

## SOUTHERN TIER CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER (STCAC)



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## National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month

Human trafficking involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act. Every year, millions of men, women, and children are trafficked worldwide – including right here in the United States. It can happen in any community and victims can be any age, race, gender, or nationality. Traffickers might use violence, manipulation, or false promises of well-paying jobs or romantic relationships to lure victims into trafficking situations.

Language barriers, fear of their traffickers, and/or fear of law enforcement frequently keep victims from seeking help, making human trafficking a hidden crime.

Traffickers use force, fraud, or coercion to lure their victims and force them into labor or commercial sexual exploitation. They look for people who are susceptible for a variety of reasons, including psychological or emotional vulnerability, economic hardship, lack of a social safety net, natural disasters, or political instability. The trauma caused by the traffickers can be so great that many may not identify themselves as victims or ask for help, even in highly public settings.

Everyone has a role to play in combating human trafficking. Recognizing the signs of human trafficking is the first step to identifying a victim.

The Southern Tier Child Advocacy Center is a proud member of the Safe Harbour program in Allegany and Cattaraugus Counties. Safe Harbour: NY implements a system-level approach within existing child welfare and allied youth-serving systems. This approach leverages existing system strengths to create a more effective and efficient response to youth who have experienced commercial sexual exploitation or trafficking, or who are vulnerable to it.

If you are concerned for the child's safety, call the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment at 1 (800) 342-3720. If the child is in imminent danger, dial 911.

To learn more about human trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation of children contact Erin Spring at 716-372-8532.



## STCAC Offers Not a Number

Not a Number is an interactive child trafficking and exploitation prevention curriculum designed to provide youth with information and skills in a manner that inspires them to make safe choices. Youth learn to identify and utilize healthy support systems that may decrease their vulnerabilities.

Through open conversations, engaging activities, the use of media, and opportunities for self-disclosure, participants will:

- Raise their awareness of what constitutes human trafficking and exploitation.
- Learn how to recognize recruitment tactics and understand vulnerabilities.
- Challenge harmful stereotypes and societal attitudes.
- Identify healthy support systems.
- Develop skills to safely navigate potential and existing exploitative situations.
- Learn how to access community resources when situations occur that increase their vulnerability (or if exploitation is already underway).

To schedule a Not a Number program, contact Erin Spring at the Southern Tier Child Advocacy Center at 716-372-8532 or at [erin.spring@alleganyco.com](mailto:erin.spring@alleganyco.com).

## Community Spotlight

The Southern Tier Child Advocacy Center wishes to recognize the following organizations and businesses for their support and contributions:



### WPIG Santa's Day Off

Thank you to the Big Pig, 7 Mountains Media, all the generous event sponsors, and all those who donated to Santa's Day Off. A special thank you to Ask Design Jewelers for their major corporate sponsorship. In its 2nd year, Santa's Day Off provided holiday cheer to STCAC children and families with gifts under the Christmas tree.



- **The Burt Foundation**
- **Mrs. Francis Mahar**



# Saving a Child... Making a Difference

## Warning Signs of Human Trafficking

- Does the person appear disconnected from family, friends, community organizations, or houses of worship?
- Has a child stopped attending school?
- Has the person had a sudden or dramatic change in behavior?
- Is a juvenile engaged in commercial sex acts?
- Is the person disoriented or confused, or showing signs of mental or physical abuse?
- Does the person have bruises in various stages of healing?
- Is the person fearful, timid, or submissive?
- Does the person show signs of having been denied food, water, sleep, or medical care?
- Is the person often in the company of someone to whom he or she defers? Or someone who seems to be in control of the situation, e.g., where they go or who they talk to?
- Does the person appear to be coached on what to say?
- Is the person living in unsuitable conditions?
- Does the person lack personal possessions and appear not to have a stable living situation?
- Does the person have freedom of movement? Can the person freely leave where they live? Are there unreasonable security measures?



## How to Help if You are Concerned About a Child

Education is key to preventing commercial sexual exploitation of children. Parents and other caring adults must help protect children from predators.

1. Set clear boundaries for children for safe and health environments.
2. Talk to children about sexual abuse through age-appropriate conversations.
3. Talk to children about sex trafficking to help protect themselves.
4. Talk to children about the dangers of social media.
5. Talk to children about the dangers of on-line gaming.
6. Monitor children's behaviors and activities for warning signs.
7. Create a safety-net of trusted adults to help supervise children during social activities.
8. Help children identify helping adults that they can talk to in times of need.
9. Use a camera cover on all laptops and electronic devices when not in use.
10. Teach children empathy for those who have experienced the trauma of sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation.

Interested in learning more? Contact the Southern Tier Child Advocacy Center to schedule a training for free either virtually or in-person.



### Understanding ACEs

**January 26, 2022**

**2:00-4:00p.m.**

**Free Virtual Workshop**

**Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACEs, are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood (0-17 years).**

**Learn:**

**Facts about ACEs**

**Brain Science behind ACEs**

**Epigenetics of ACEs**

**Pre-registration required at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/understanding-aces-tickets-214648157417>.**

**Training sponsored by Trauma-Informed Communities throughout Allegany County and supported by STCAC.**

**Facilitator: Belinda Knight  
Nationally Certified ACE  
Interface Trainer**

# MOBILE UNIT ADDRESSES FAMILY NEEDS

Families face many barriers accessing services including transportation. For families who face challenges of traveling to our STCAC sites, we proudly offer a family-centered alternative.

The STCAC staff and our MDT partners can provide services throughout Allegany and Cattaraugus Counties in our Mobile Unit. Our "STCAC on wheels" is equipped with a full forensic interviewing room, where children and families can meet staff in a safe, secure location right in their hometown.

As well, the mobile unit is available for Family Advocacy and Mental Health Therapy appointments. The STCAC Mobile Unit is funded through a grant from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services.

"The Mobile Unit allows our team to provide important services to families by meeting them where they live, work, or receive other services," explained Dave Chambers, STCAC Program Manager. "It can be parked at schools, healthcare centers, apartment complexes, or anywhere large enough to support the vehicle."

To learn more, contact Dave Chambers at 716-372-8532 or at [david.chambers@alleganyco.com](mailto:david.chambers@alleganyco.com).

## Multidisciplinary Team Advisory Board Members

Thank you to the following MDT Advisory Board members:

Allegany County Community Services  
Allegany County Department of Social Services  
Allegany County District Attorney  
Allegany County Probation  
Catholic Charities  
Cattaraugus County Community Services  
Cattaraugus County Department of Social Services  
Cattaraugus County District Attorney  
Cattaraugus County Sheriff's Department  
Connecting Communities in Action  
Craig Zuckerman, MD  
Cuba Police Department  
Jack Coyne, MD  
Seneca Nation of Indians  
Wellsville Police Department



Positive relationships protect children from high risk behaviors. Sometimes all it takes is #onecaringadult to make a difference.

The Southern Tier Child Advocacy Center is a proud partner of the Trauma-Informed Communities throughout Allegany County Coalition in creating a new initiative that supports adults in their role as mentors, coaches, and caregivers.

The project provides basic tips and strategies adults may use if they encounter a child who reports, or they suspect, of:

- sexual abuse,
- dating violence,
- bullying,
- online sexual exploitation,
- sexually transmitted infections,
- questioning their sexuality,
- misusing alcohol and/or other drugs,
- pregnancy,
- mental illness,
- toxic stress or academic stress, or
- contemplated suicide.

So many of these problems are related to, or a result of, adverse childhood experiences that can last a life-time.

#onecaringadult equips community members with resources and information to help.

For further information on #onecaringadult, visit [www.traumainformedalleganycounty.org](http://www.traumainformedalleganycounty.org).

# YEAR IN REVIEW

## FAMILY ADVOCACY SERVICES 2021

Total number of services rendered in 2021:

- Information About the Criminal Justice Process: 499
- Information About Victim Rights, How to Obtain Notifications, etc: 480
- Referral to Other Victim Service Programs: 232
- Referral to Other Services, Supports, and Resources: 289
- Assistance With Compensation Claim/Filing: 9
- Victim Advocacy/Accompaniment to Emergency Medical Care: 2
- Victim Advocacy/Accompaniment to Medical Forensic Exam: 20
- Law Enforcement Interview Advocacy/Accompaniment (includes CPS and All Forensic Interviews): 18
- Individual Advocacy: 21
- Intervention With Employer, Creditor, Landlord, or Academic Institution: 9
- Child or Dependent Care Assistance: 447
- Transportation Assistance: 18
- Transportation Assistance/Home Visits/Off- Site Visits: 10
- Crisis Intervention: 50
- Hotline/Crisis Line Counseling: 4
- On-scene Crisis Response: 8
- Individual Counseling (By anyone other than Licensed Therapist): 175
- Support Groups: 38
- Therapy (By a Licensed Therapist): 5
- Emergency Financial Assistance: 30
- Case Management/Coordination: 529
- Notification of Criminal Justice Events: 15
- Victim Impact Statement Assistance: 3
- Civil Legal Assistance in Obtaining Protection or Restraining Order: 6
- Civil Legal Assistance With Family Law Issues: 4
- Prosecution Interview Advocacy/Accompaniment: 8
- Law Enforcement Interview Advocacy/Accompaniment: 2
- Legal Aid or Other Legal Services Accompaniment: 2
- Mental Health Intake: 23

## 2021 STCAC Statistics

# of New Children Served: 288

### Gender of Children Served

Females: 205

Males: 82

Gender Not Reported: 1

### Age of Children Served

0-6 Years of Age: 83

7-12 Years of Age: 112

13-18 Years of Age: 93

### Types of Abuse Reported

Adult Sexual Assault: 1

Child Neglect: 3

Child Physical Abuse: 26

Child Sexual Abuse: 203

Child Sexual Abuse (Witness To): 12

Child Sexual Abuse Images: 9

Child Trafficking: Sex: 1

Witness to Violence: 5

Youth with Problematic Sexual Behaviors (YPSB): 16

### Services Rendered

Medical Exam: 10

On-site Forensic Interview: 255

Off-Site Forensic Interview: 4

External Mental Health Therapy: 63

On-site Mental Health Therapy: 44

Case Management Services: 315

Total # of Cases (All Cases: New and Ongoing): 922

Total # of Clients  
(All Cases/Duplicated Count)

Clients: 3,581

Associated Persons: 1,976

Case Review: 479 Total Cases